

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 OMB-01 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5171
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABU
AMEMBASSY CAIROPOOTY
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1380

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, SO, ET
SUBJ: SOMALIA'S TERRITORIAL CLAIMS IN ETHIOPIA

REFS: A) MOGADISCIO 1348; B) STATE 187303

1. THERE IS TENDENCY AMONG WESTERN DIPLOMATS LIKE OURSELVES
AND JOURNALISTS LIKE COLIN LEGUM, TO CYNICALLY DISMISS WSLF
TERRITORIAL CLAIMS AGAINST ETHIOPIA. THESE CLAIMS REACH
BEYOND OGADEN REGIONS OF HARERGE AND BALE INTO SIDAMO AND
ARUSSI AS WELL. MAP SHOWN COLIN LEGUM AT WSLF HQS IN
MOGADISCIO INCLUDED TOWN OF NAZARETH (REF A).

2. IN PAST MANY HAVE ASSUMED THAT SOMALIA ONLY SOUGHT TO GAIN
THOSE TERRITORIES OCCUPIED BY ETHNIC SOMALI TRIBES AND THAT
WHEN CHIPS WERE DOWN IT WOULDN'T PRESS THOSE ETHNIC CLAIMS
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TO THEIR GEOGRAPHICAL LIMIT. MAP WHICH IDENTIFIED THESE SOMALI
LANDS WAS PRINTED SOME YEARS AGO BY GSDR AND ITS CIRCULATION
IN OAU QUARTERS AND ELSEWHERE AROUSED INDIGNATION IN
ETHIOPIA AND KENYA. MAP SHOWN COLIN LEGUM BY GALLA
LEADER WAKHA GUTTO ON AUGUST 7 WAS CLEARLY NOT RPT NOT
SAME MEQ.

3. OUR INFORMATION ON WESTERN SOMALI LIBERATION FRONT HAS BEEN MEAGRE. IT NOW SEEMS APPARENT THAT IN JANUARY, 1976 WHEN WSLF WAS RESTRUCTURED (76-MOGADISCIO 0324), NEW ORGANIZATION INCORPORATED CADRE OF ETHIOPIAN GALLAS (OROMO GROUP) AS WELL. DURING COLIN LEGUM'S TALKS WITH WSLF, HE LEARNED THAT WSLF CONSISTS OF TWO WINGS, EACH WITH ITS OWN SECRETARY GENERAL, WITH THE OLD GALLA WARRIOR WAKHA GUTTO CHAIRING THE WSLF POLITBURO. WAKHA GUTTO DENIED ANY AFFILIATION WITH THE OLD OROMO LIBERATION FRONT.

4. WE HAVE NOTICED ALSO IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH ARAB SOURCES REGARDING WSLF THAT THEY MAKE MENTAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE ADJACENT OGADEN FRONT AND THE WESTERN SOMALIA FRONT. THE DISTINCTION THEY MAKE IS THAT ONE WSLF FACTION INCLUDES ETHNIC SOMALIS -- PRINCIPALLY OGWZEN BRANCHES OF SOMALI TRIBESMEN -- AND OTHER DOES NOT.

5. IT THEREFORE SEEMS PLAIN THEN THAT THE WSLF INCLUDES TWO ETHNIC FACTIONS -- THE SOMALI FACTION AND THE GALLA FACTION (OROMO). THE MAP COLIN LEGUM SAW WHICH TOOK THE NEW BORDERS OF WESTERN SOMALIA INTO THE AWASH VALLEY AND THE LOWER SLOPES OF SHOA REFLECTS GALLA OR OROMO POLITICAL AMBITIONS, WHICH ARE PART AND PARCEL TO THE WSLF DESIGN. IT INCLUDES THE ARUSSI GALLA, THE GALLAS ONCE LOYAL TO WAKA GUTTU, AND PROBABLY OTHERS AS WELL. IT REACHES
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DEEP INTO ETHIOPIA.

6. THIS IS WORTH KEEPING IN MIND. WHILE THE NEWS REPORTS EMPHASIZE A WAR IN WHICH QTE ETHNIC-SOMALIS UNQTE ARE TRYING TO RECOVER THEIR PATRIMONIAL LANDS, WHAT IS IGNORED IS THAT THE WSLF HAS AN ADDITIONAL DIMENSION WHICH SEEMS TO BE UNRECOGNIZED. THE WSLF EVIDENTLY INCLUDES ETHIOPIAN GALLAS WHO ARE LINKED TO THE SOMALIS BY LINGUISTIC, CULTURAL AND CONFESSIONAL TIES AND BY THEIR SHARED HATRED OF THE RULES IN ADDIS ABABA. WHETHER THE WSLF CAN ULTIMATELY ACHIEVE GALLA AMBITIONS BY MILITARY CONQUEST REMAINS TO BE SEEN. BUT CERTAINLY GALLA PARTICIPATION SHOULD NOT GO UNRECOGNIZED NOR SHOULD IT BE DISMISSED OUT OF HAND AS A SIAD FABRICATION.

7. AUGUST 9 WE DISCUSSED WITH PROFESSOR ANDREJEWSKI OF THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES -- CURRENTLY IN MOGADISCIO -- THE TIES BETWEEN SOMALI TRIBESMEN AND THE GALLA (OROMO) OF ETHIOPIA. PROFESSOR ANDREJEWSKI IS ONE OF THE FOREMOST WESTERN SCHOLARS ON BOTH SOMALI AND THE OROMO GROUP, THEIR LANGUAGE AND CULTURE. HE REGARDS THE TIES BETWEEN THE SOMALI AND MANY OF THE OROMO AS

GENUINE AND SUFFICIENT TO BRING TO THE WSLF A GREAT DEAL
OF OROMO SUPPORT FOR WSLF OBJECTIVES IN ETHIOPIA.

8. THE GALLA OF ETHILPIA ARE OF COURSE NOT OUR BUSINESS.
WE DON'T INTEND TO EXAGGERATE THEIR IMPORTANCE TO THE
WSLF OR THEIR IDENTITY OF PURPOSE WITH THEIR ETHNIC
SOMALI NEIGHBORS. WE ONLY WISH TO POINT OUT THAT THEY
ARE A FACTOR IN THE CURRENT SOMALI OFFENSIVE IN
ETHIOPIA.
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